

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 09512

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY) BQG
SUBJECT: THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO BERLIN: SOVIET
COMPLAINTS

REFS: (A) USBER 1173; (B) STATE 101239; (C) STATE 87690

1. THE SOVIETS MAY PURSUE THEIR COMPLAINT ABOUT THE
LIKELIHOOD THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY
CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT OR FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER WHEN HE
VISITS BERLIN. IF SO, IN REJECTING SUCH COMPLAINTS IT IS
WORTH BEARING IN MIND OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANSWERING
SOVIET PROTESTS CONCERNING VISITS TO BERLIN BY HIGH
OFFICIALS FROM COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THE US, BRITAIN,
AND FRANCE.

2. THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, IN ANSWERING SOVIET AMBAS-
SADOR ABRASIMOV'S OBJECTION TO THE FACT THAT THE QUEEN
MIGHT BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE CHANCELLOR AND THE FOREIGN
MINISTER ON HER VISIT TO BERLIN THIS WEEK, GAVE WHAT
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WAS A CORRECT ANSWER, AS FAR AS IT WENT: THAT HER
MAJESTY WAS ENTITLED TO VISIT BERLIN WHENEVER SHE WISHED
AND WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY ANYBODY SHE CHOSE. TO SOME
EXTENT, THE CHANCELLOR HIMSELF USED THE SAME LINE IN HIS
CONVERSATION WITH BREZHNEV, WHEN HE POINTED OUT THAT THE
PRESIDENT AND THE QUEEN WOULD BE VISITING BERLIN IN THEIR
OWN RIGHT AND THAT HE WAS SIMPLY GOING ALONG AS A MATTER

OF COURTESY.

3. WE ARE, IN FACT, SURPRISED THAT SCHMIDT TOOK THIS LINE WITH BREZHNEV. IT WAS, OF COURSE, A CORRECT LINE, AND ONE DESIGNED TO ASSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO ACRIMONY FROM THE SOVIET SIDE IN CONNECTION WITH THESE TWO STATE VISITS. BUT THE DIFFICULTY IS THAT IT LEAVES THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT VULNERABLE WITH REGARD TO OTHER STATE VISITORS.

4. THERE ARE IN FACT NUMEROUS STATE AND OFFICIAL VISITORS TO THE FRG WHO ALSO GO TO BERLIN AT THE BEHEST OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. NORMALLY THEY ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER, AND NORMALLY THE SOVIETS PROTEST. THE STANDARD ALLIED REPLY TO SUCH PROTESTS IS THAT SUCH VISITS ARE PROPER BECAUSE OF THE TIES BETWEEN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND BERLIN. THEY ARE ALSO PROPER BECAUSE IT IS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WHICH REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF WEST BERLIN IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. SOLE RELIANCE, IN THE CASE OF VISITORS FROM THE THREE ALLIED OCCUPYING POWERS, ON THE FACT THAT THOSE VISITORS GO THERE IN THEIR OWN RIGHT TENDS TO UNDERMINE THE ALLIED ARGUMENTS ON THE LEGALITY OF VISITS UNDER FRG AUSPICES BY OFFICIALS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES.

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5. SHOULD THE SOVIETS RENEW THEIR PROTEST IN CONNECTION WITH THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT, WE THUS RECOMMEND THAT THE REPLY NOT BE LIMITED TO THAT USED BY THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN CONNECTION WITH THE QUEEN'S VISIT. IT WOULD BE WORTH NOTING IN ADDITION THAT AS A GENERAL PRINCIPLE IT IS QUITE PROPER FOR FEDERAL OFFICIALS TO ACCOMPANY ANY STATE OR OFFICIAL VISITORS TO WEST BERLIN.
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